

It has been said that Americans didn't think much of their Capital until they had to defend it during attack in the War of 1812 when, as all of you know, in 1814 the White House was burned. In a way, history is repeating itself, because for too long, Americans have not thought enough about our Capital City. But Washington is still worth fighting for. In fact, it's more worth fighting for than ever.

The people I have seen who live in this city, who do miraculous things every day to try to help people make more of their own lives, to try to help kids in trouble, to try to turn things around and see people live up to their potential, deserve more than the rest of us have done. And I am determined that even though the solu-

tions will not come overnight, we will provide our part of the effort. And together, with local government and business, with the involvement of every citizen, we can have a strategy and implement a strategy that makes Washington the city we all know it ought to be and that we must believe it will be.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Marion S. Barry, Jr., of the District of Columbia; Andrew F. Brimmer, chairman, DC Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority; and District of Columbia Ward 2 Councilman Jack Evans.

Remarks at a Reception for Senator Byron L. Dorgan

March 11, 1997

Thank you. I'm delighted to be on the stage with 40 percent of all the Democrats from North Dakota. [Laughter] You know, in 1974 it took three of them to lose the race for Congress; I did it at home all by myself. [Laughter] And I now know why they lost. The only person who should have been talking up here was Kim. [Laughter] And she hasn't said a word. I made her go out first tonight so I knew we'd get an applause instead of a boo. [Laughter]

I am delighted to be here. I am honored to be here with Senator Dorgan and Senator Conrad and Congressman Pomeroy. The three of them represent what I hope and believe, philosophically and in terms of their commitment to public service and the way they do their work, is not just the future of our party but the future of our country, because they have repeatedly been willing to stand up and make tough decisions, some of which are popular with the electorate back home in North Dakota and may not be so popular with people here in Washington, some of which are not popular anywhere, but they just think they're right.

And I have a special feeling for Byron Dorgan. I followed his career long before he became a Senator, and I admired mightily what he did in North Dakota. Kent said he was voted the most powerful politician in North Dakota, and he said that he was sure that the person

handling the revenues in Arkansas wasn't the most powerful person in the State. Actually, he was; I just had sense enough to make sure the folks didn't know that. [Laughter] I don't know how he got out of that box.

I really admire him. He deserves to be reelected. I'm glad you're here to help him. And I'd just like to remind you of a couple of things that often get lost in the hurly-burly of daily events around here. Thanks in no small measure to the leadership that he has exerted and the support that he has given, we reversed more than a decade of trickle-down, supply-side economics and replaced it with invest-and-grow economics. And by the narrowest of margin, thanks to his strong support and his vote, we reduced the deficit 63 percent, and this economy has produced 11½ million jobs for the first time ever in 4 years and the lowest combined rates of unemployment and inflation since the 1960's. That's enough to get him reelected. You deserve that.

In 1992 people talked about problems like crime and welfare as if they would always be with us in the same way that they were. But we have reversed; trends have declined—working with people all over this country—putting 100,000 police on the street; working with States to move people from welfare to work, 2¼ million people. Now it will be 2½ million when

we get the last total in 4 years, the largest number of people ever to move off the welfare rolls. And we have more to do. But that's something to be proud of. The crime rate going down every year, that's something to be proud of.

We have reasserted the importance of the family in our social policy, with the family and medical leave law, with special tax breaks for families with modest incomes, by raising the minimum wage, by passing the V-chip legislation and taking on some of these other very tough issues. I think it's very important. That's the kind of pro-family policy that Senator Dorgan has fought for.

We have fought for free and for fair trade for America. We're the number one exporter in the world again. We had record exports for the last 4 years. We've reasserted the leadership role of our country in reducing the nuclear threat and taking advantage of the opportunities that are out there.

Now, we've got a lot left to do. We still have to balance the budget. People tell me all the time, "Well, can we keep this recovery going?" The answer is, we can if we do the right things but only if we do the right things. The American people are more than doing their part. They're willing to keep working. They're willing to keep starting small businesses, keep expanding businesses. They're dying to improve their education and skills and to become more productive. We have to create the conditions and give people

the tools to make the most of their own lives. If we do it, we'll keep going forward.

That's what is at stake when Byron Dorgan presents himself to the people of North Dakota again. And no one should forget that on the major policy questions of the last 4 years, no matter how controversial, no matter how tight, no matter how tough, he stood up and cast the right vote. And this is a better, stronger country, and his State is better and stronger because of it. And he deserves to be rewarded for the leadership he's exercised and, most important, for the potential he has in the future for balancing the budget, for putting education first among our priorities, for doing the right thing to finish the work of welfare reform, for dealing with the problems that rural States have that are so easy to overlook here in Washington unless you have the kind of strong, clear voice that he has exhibited.

So you're doing a good thing being here for him tonight. And I'm glad to be here with him. I am honored to be his friend, honored to work with him every day. And I trust that I will have the chance to do that until I am term-limited out and he goes on to his just reward. [Laughter]

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7 p.m. in the John Hay Room at the Hay-Adams Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Dorgan's wife, Kim.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner *March 11, 1997*

Thank you. Please sit down. Thank you. First of all, I want to thank Roy Romer for his willingness to go back and forth across America, from here to Colorado and back several times every week to try to help us do what all of us need to do with our party. I thank in his absence Steve Grossman. We're all thinking about him and Barbara. Nothing hurts worse than cracking your elbow, I don't think, and we've got to be thinking about them. And I thank Alan Solomont for his work. And I thank all of you for your support.

I have just come from an event for Senator Byron Dorgan of North Dakota. It was a fas-

cinating event. You know, North Dakota is a State that's so small, I felt like a sophisticate from Arkansas being there. [Laughter] And it's one of the few delegations that's completely Democratic, even though the State always votes Republican in Presidential elections. They have two Democratic Senators and a Democratic Congressman.

And the first time Byron Dorgan ran for Congress was in 1974, the first year I ran for public office. And Senator Conrad was his campaign manager, and Congressman Pomeroy was his driver. And I told him that it took all three of them to lose that race, and I lost mine all